

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 020372

11

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R 302358Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 020372

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, ETRN, UR

SUBJECT: SEAMEN'S WELFARE IN THE SOVIET UNION

REF: MOSCOW 0991

1. ALTHOUGH MASLOV OF SOVINFLLOT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY LIKE TO FOIST HIS WORK ON THE EMBASSY, DEPARTMENT AND MARAD AGREE WE SHOULD INSIST THAT SOVIETS THEMSELVES CARRY OUT ALL THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SEAMEN'S WELFARE. SOVINFLLOT HAS CONTRACTUAL AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR SEAMEN IN THE SOVIET UNION AND SHOULD PERFORM SINCE THE SHIP OWNER PAYS FOR SERVICES RENDERED.

2. DURING NOVEMBER TALKS, MASLOV DESCRIBED HIS DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING HOTEL SPACE FOR TRANSIENT SEAMEN. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS SAID THEY UNDERSTOOD MOSCOW PROBLEMS, BUT THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR WELFARE LIES WITH INFLOT. MASLOV AGREED. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS GAVE MASLOV THE EMBASSY AND

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 020372

CONSULATE GENERAL TELEX NUMBERS TO HELP INFLOT AGRNCIES

ESTABLISH DIRECT CONTACT IN WELFARE CASES AND EMERGENCIES. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS NOTED THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD OF COURSE WANT TO KNOW WHEN A SEAMAN'S WELFARE WAS THREATENED AND WOULD DO AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO HELP IN SERIOUS CASES SUCH AS MEDICAL EVACUATIONS. DEPARTMENT DID NOT RPT NOT OFFER TO TAKE OVER MASLOV'S HOTEL RESERVATION RESPONSIBILITIES.

3. AGREED PAPER FROM NOVEMBER TALKS ON SEAMEN'S WELFARE WAS QUOTE: THE SOVIET SIDE AGREED TO INSTRUCT INFLOT AGENTS TO INFORM THE US EMBASSY BY TELEX WHEN AMERICAN SEAMEN WERE BEING REPATRIATED VIA MOSCOW. BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT WELFARE IS THE AGENT'S RESPONSIBILITY; THE SOVIET SIDE MAY BUILD A SPECIAL SEAMENS HOTEL IN MOSCOW. END QUOTE.

4. WITH REGARD TO WEEK-LONG DELAY OF TRAVEL PERMISSION FOR RADIO OFFICER OLSEN'S EYE SURGERY, EMBASSY MAY INFORM AVERIN AND MASLOV THAT WE CONSIDER SOVIET OFFICIALS' BEHAVIOR UNACCEPTABLE AND LACKING BASIC HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATION FOR OLSEN'S WELFARE. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND MASLOV'S PROBLEMS IN SOVIET ENVIRONMENT, WE FEEL HE AND INFLOT AGENTS SHOULD VIGOROUSLY PROTECT AMERICAN SEAMAN'S WELFARE AND ACT AS SEAMAN'S ADVOCATE WITH OTHER SOVIET AGENCIES RATHER THAN USE BUREAUCRACY AS EXCUSE FOR NON-PERFORMANCE. KISSINGER

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